

HOUSE BILL 4214

By Windle

AN ACT to name the Tennessee National Guard Armory in Livingston in honor of the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, Tennessee Army National Guard.

WHEREAS, many fine and honorable traditions have arisen from the deep wellspring of honor and bravery possessed by Tennesseans, but there is no finer tradition than that which gave Tennessee its nickname; and

WHEREAS, the citizens of the "Volunteer State" have, throughout the years, willingly forsaken the comforts and securities of inaction by taking up arms against the enemies of this great Nation, risking their lives and leaving their loved ones behind to honorably safeguard the freedoms and liberties guaranteed to all citizens of these United States and vanquishing those who threaten our way of life; and

WHEREAS, established in 1887 by an act of the 45th General Assembly, the Tennessee National Guard is a dedicated collection of the finest men and women this State has to offer; always vigilant and prepared for duty, the Tennessee National Guard has proven time and again its ability to protect fellow Tennesseans and Americans and those around the world in need of aid; and

WHEREAS, our State has given birth to many fine soldiers whose deeds of valor and honor have reflected favorably on the Volunteer State, even as they have inspired us all to reach for greater glory; and

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways, bridges, and buildings to honor the memory of those courageous members of our military forces who gave their lives in the defense of our nation; and

WHEREAS, no Tennessean is more deserving of this honor than the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, K Troop, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee

Army National Guard, who was killed in combat on October 13, 2005, in Ad Dujayl, Iraq while serving with distinction in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom III; and

WHEREAS, following the patriotic tradition for which the Volunteer State is renowned, Wesley Tucker joined the Tennessee Army National Guard on October 6, 2003, and subsequently served with distinction as a Sergeant in the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment for two years; and

WHEREAS, also known as the Third Tennessee/Three River Regiment, the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment is headquartered in Knoxville, with units throughout East and Middle Tennessee; this regiment of over 3000 soldiers was mobilized in June of 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Tucker served with great distinction as a member of the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment; his many awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Iraqi Campaign Medal, Global War on Terrorism Medal, Armed Forces Reserve Medal with M Device, Army Service Ribbon, Overseas Service Ribbon, Combat Action Badge, and Overseas Service Bar 2nd Award at the federal level and the Governor's Meritorious Unit Citation and Tennessee National Guard War Service Ribbon at the state level; and

WHEREAS, like thousands of others of this nation's sons and daughters, Wesley Tucker did not shrink from serving in combat, believing in the justice of the cause to protect our national security and liberty and to free the Iraqi people; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Wesley Tucker served with great courage and gallantry, giving his life for his country and for the cause in which he believed, and for that ultimate sacrifice, he deserves proper recognition; as a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard, he proudly continued an essential tradition of American society: the concept of the citizen-soldier; and

WHEREAS, Wesley Tucker's dedication to excellence in the military and his love of his family, his fellow soldiers and his country, exemplified in his sacrifice of life itself in defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of all the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, in civilian life, Wesley Tucker was a dedicated employee of the Clay County Highway Department, and he worked with purpose and conviction to build and maintain the best roads possible for the citizens of Clay County; and

WHEREAS, this valiant soldier is survived by his parents, sister, wife, Muriel, and daughter, Cameron Marie Tucker; and

WHEREAS, it is most appropriate for this General Assembly to permanently commemorate the singular patriotism, courage, and commitment to duty of the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker by naming the Tennessee National Guard Armory in Livingston in his honor; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the Tennessee National Guard Armory located at 2029 Cookeville Highway in Livingston, Overton County, is hereby named in honor of the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, as a lasting tribute to one of the most outstanding citizen-soldiers this State has ever produced.

SECTION 2. The Department of Military is directed to erect or affix suitable signs designating the Livingston Tennessee National Guard Armory as the " Sgt. Robert Wesley Tucker National Guard Armory".

SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.